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Department of Planning & Zoning**

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**STAFF REPORT
2005-2006 AREA PLANS REVIEW**

SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S): Mount Vernon

APR ITEM(S): 05-III-2P

NOMINATOR(S): Lisa M. Chiblow for Christopher Land, LLC

ACREAGE: 13.16 Acres

TAX MAP I.D. NUMBERS: 98-1((1)) 58, 60-66; 98-1((3)) 14-1

GENERAL LOCATION: South of Pohick Road, west of Giles St

PLANNING AREA(S): III

District(s): Pohick

Sector: Burke Lake (P7)

Special Area(s): N/A

ADOPTED PLAN MAP: Residential use at a density of 1-2 dwelling units per acre (du/ac).

ADOPTED PLAN TEXT: Residential use at a density of 1-2 du/ac.

For complete Plan text see www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/comprehensiveplan/planareas.htm

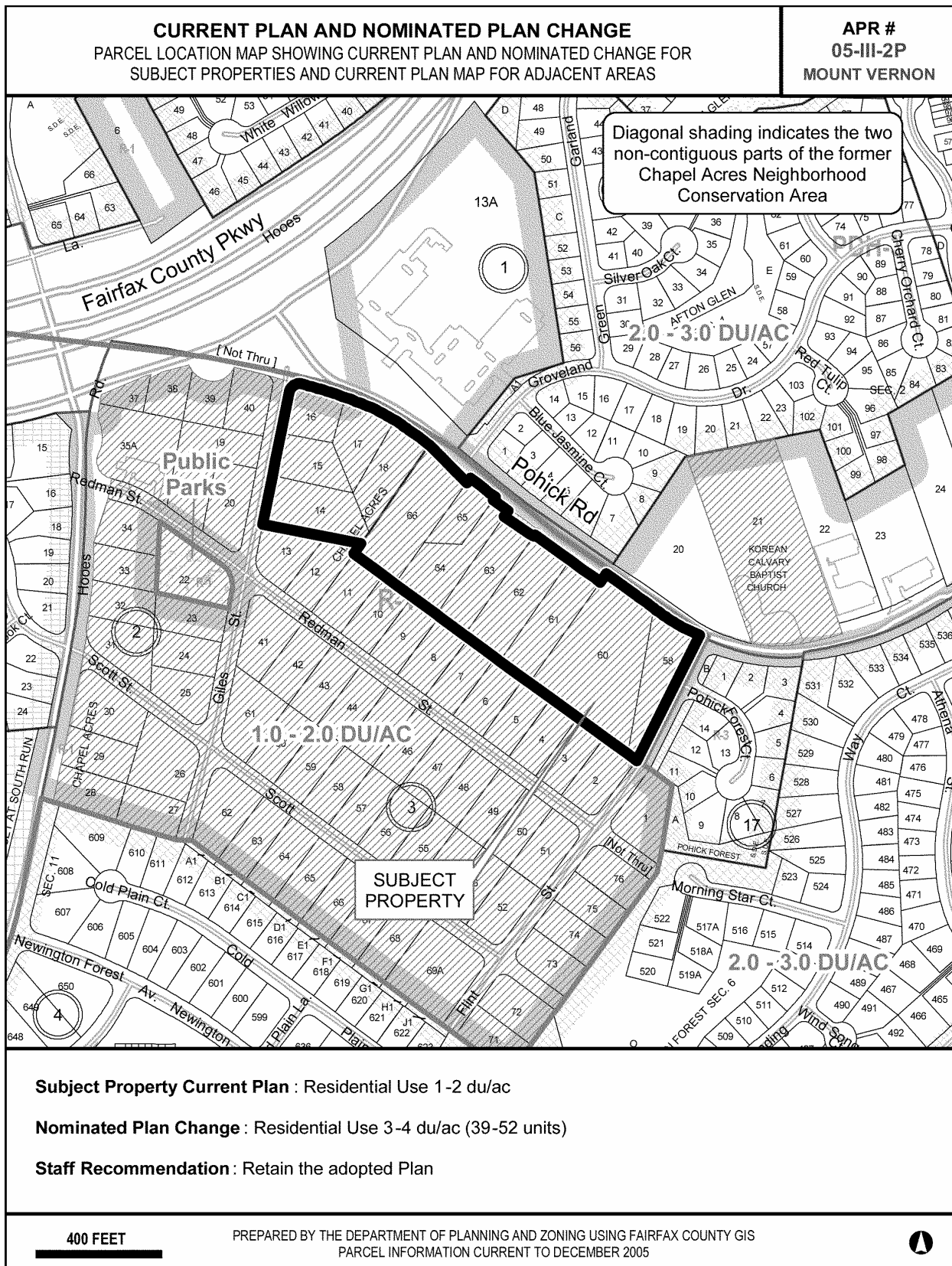
PROPOSED PLAN AMENDMENT: Residential use at a density of 3-4 du/ac.

SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION

____ Approve Nomination as submitted

____ Approve Staff Alternative

 X Retain Adopted Plan



CONTEXT

General Location:

The 13.2-acre subject property is located along the south side of Pohick Road at its intersection with the Fairfax County Parkway.

Planned and Existing Land Use and Zoning

Subject Property: The subject property is located within the Burke Lake Community Planning Sector in the Pohick Planning District. It is currently planned for residential use at 1-2 dwelling units per acre (du/ac). The Plan gives specific recommendations to maintain the low density residential character of the area in order to protect water quality in the local watershed. The Plan would yield a total of 13-26 dwelling units. Twelve single family detached residences currently exist on the subject area, which is zoned R-1. The Plan map indicates that the subject property is part of the former Chapel Acres Neighborhood Conservation Area. Conservation Area designation encourages neighborhood stability in specific areas through infrastructure improvements such as curbs, gutters, and sidewalks.

Adjacent Area:

North: The nomination is surrounded predominantly by residential neighborhoods, with the exception of a newly constructed church, located directly north of the subject property across Pohick Road. The Afton Green neighborhood is also located north of the subject property, to the east of the church. It is planned for residential use at a density of 2-3 du/ac and zoned PDH-3. This community is generally screened from view along Pohick Road by trees. A portion of the area north of the subject property consists of a vacant parcel, which has substantial tree cover.

West/South: The areas west and south of the subject property are also planned for residential use at one to two du/ac. This area is also part of the former Chapel Acres Neighborhood Conservation Area. It is zoned R-1 and developed with single family detached houses.

East: The area to the east outside of the Conservation Area is planned for residential use at a density of 2-3 du/ac. It is zoned and developed at R-3 and PDH-3.

PLANNING HISTORY

No Comprehensive Plan changes were proposed for this area since 1997.

ADOPTED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TEXT

Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2003 Edition, Area III, Pohick Planning District, as amended through 12-6-2004, P7-Burke Lake Community Planning Sector, Land Use Recommendations, page 76:

“The Burke Lake Sector consists largely of stable residential neighborhoods. Infill development in these neighborhoods should be of a compatible use, type and intensity in

accordance with the guidance provided by the Policy Plan under Land Use Objectives 8 and 14.

The South Run watershed is dominated by three major parks, recreational and open space uses: the Burke Lake Park, the South Run District Park and the Lake Mercer (Recreation Lake) Park. Any development within this watershed should be managed to preserve the quality and value of these facilities. The two largest facilities are primarily recreational, which makes it necessary to control runoff and water quality and protect the vegetation and selected topographical features. The following specific recommendations indicate planned density ranges and development restrictions that will enable the County to realize environmental protection and density transition objectives in the South Run watershed.

Figure 39 indicates the geographic location of land use recommendations for this sector. Where recommendations are not shown on the General Locator Map, it is so noted.

1. Segment between Hooes Road, Pohick Road, and the District of Columbia Department of Corrections Facility. This segment is dominated by the over 700-acre Newington Forest development. The majority of this area is planned for residential use at 2-3 dwelling units per acre. The Chapel Acres subdivision is planned for 1-2 dwelling units per acre. Development coordination and consolidation of parcels where appropriate to allow preservation of environmental features and good internal traffic circulation is a condition for approval of densities above the low-end of the Plan density range as shown on the Plan map.”

The adopted Comprehensive Plan Map shows this area planned for residential use at 1-2 du/ac.

NOMINATED PLAN AMENDMENT

The nomination proposes an increase in the residential density on the site to 3-4 du/ac, which would result in 39-53 dwelling units.

ANALYSIS

Land Use: The nomination proposes to increase residential density to a level greater than the existing and planned densities of the area. This density could potentially quadruple the amount of residential units on the subject area and double the maximum density allowed under the current Plan. This increased density would not be consistent to the surrounding densities. It would result in a density that is four times the existing density to the south and west and twice the density to the east. The increased density would disrupt the development pattern in the area and would work against the Plan goal to preserve the character of the area.

Furthermore, the Chapel Acres subdivision, as defined by the conservation area plan, consists of a greater area than the nominated property by including the area to the south and west. As a result, the nomination does not present a logical consolidation, as the majority of the subdivision would remain planned at the lower density. The proposed development would constitute an

encroachment into the stable residential neighborhood that was formerly designated as a conservation area.

Schools: The current planned densities on the subject property would result in a maximum yield of 12 students in these schools: six elementary, two middle school, and four high school students. Under the proposed APR nomination, a maximum of 13 additional students above the current planned recommendations, or 13 elementary, 4 middle, and 8 high school students would result. The proposed nomination would contribute to the pre-existing schools imbalance.

The subject property is currently served by the South County High School (HS), the South County Middle School (MS), and Newington Forest Elementary School (ES). All of the schools serving this site are experiencing significant capacity imbalances which are projected to remain through the 2010 to 2011 school year. Boundary adjustments may be considered in the future to address capacity deficiencies. The following table describes the current and projected school capacity imbalance:

School Attendance Pyramid Impacted By Proposed Plan Nomination

School Pyramid	9/30/05 Capacity	9/30/05 Membership	2006-2007 Membership	Memb/Cap Difference 2006-2007	2010-2011 Membership	Memb/Cap Difference 2010-2011
South County HS	1700	1422	1938	-238	2259	-559
South County MS	800	1023	1068	-268	1085	-285
Newington Forest ES	582	628	634	-52	671	-89

Environmental Resources: The nomination, which would facilitate redevelopment of a portion of the Chapel Acres community, presents environmental concern due to its proximity to the Fairfax County Parkway, the potential loss of mature tree cover, and negative effects of development on the watershed. The northwest corner of the subject property is located almost adjacent to the Parkway and any development may experience adverse impacts due to the vehicular noise. Also, a mature tree canopy exists on an undisturbed portion of the eastern edge of this site. The preservation of the trees and the impact of the noise would warrant additional study. Noise mitigation measures should be implemented with any development, and tree save should be investigated.

As the property is located within the Pohick Creek watershed, any additional development may cause water quality problems due to pollution and run off. The 2004 Fairfax County Physical Stream Assessment rates this part of the watershed as having poor habitat quality (84 out of 200 on a scale ranging from very poor to excellent). In addition the study found a total of 871 “inventory points,” such as deficient buffers, crossings, ditches and pipes, erosion, head cuts, obstructions and utilities, in the Pohick Creek Watershed.

The 2001 Fairfax County Stream Protection Strategy Baseline Study classifies this area for protection. The primary goal for this category is to “Preserve biological integrity by taking measures to identify and protect, to the extent possible, the conditions responsible for current high quality rating of these streams.” The nomination could affect the water quality through

additional stormwater run-off and pollution, and the area already experiences concern over drainage and stormwater run-off. The nomination suggests that these issues would be addressed; however, this improvement would occur at the rezoning level.

Parks and Recreation: The Pohick Planning District is served by 30 local parks, 8 district and countywide parks, and 10 resource-based parks, totaling approximately 5,709 acres. The local, district, and countywide parks total 2,342 acres. The nomination would increase the population in the area and would increase the public need for parks and park facilities. Because the area is underserved, the nominated density would contribute to an existing and projected deficit of parkland and services. In 2004, the Pohick Planning District was deficient by 251 acres of local parkland, and this deficiency is projected to increase to 296 acres of local parkland by 2015. Athletic fields and playgrounds are also underserved. These deficiencies reflect adopted population-based service level standards for typical park types and facilities.

Transportation: The increased residential density would increase daily traffic generated by the site by 248 trips. AM and PM peak hour traffic generation is estimated to increase by very modest levels. In regards to the access, the nominator proposes to develop the property in a manner that will eliminate multiple direct driveway entrances on Pohick Road. The reduction of access points would provide a transportation and safety benefit, by reducing friction and conflict points in an area of the roadway that carries traffic oriented to and from the Fairfax County Parkway.

RECOMMENDATION

The nomination proposes to increase residential density on the subject property from 1-2 du/ac to 3-4 du/ac. The proposal would result in a maximum density that is four times the existing density and twice the maximum density allowed under the current Plan. This density would disrupt the character of the surrounding neighborhoods. These neighborhoods are also planned and developed as 1-2 du/ac to the south and west and 2-3 du/ac to the north and east.

Furthermore, the nomination proposes consolidation and redevelopment of only a portion of the subdivision in which it is located. Although the subject property consists of contiguous parcels along Pohick Road, these parcels are only a portion of the larger subdivision, which is the location of the former Chapel Acres Neighborhood Conservation Area. The boundaries of the former Conservation Area contain the neighborhood in its entirety. The purpose of the designation was to provide infrastructure improvements and thus foster neighborhood stability. This nomination consolidates only a portion of the subdivision and would not provide benefit to the greater area, designated within the Area.

Other consideration was given to transportation, environmental, parks, and school concern. The benefit the nomination may provide in terms of consolidation of access from Pohick Road is outweighed by other concerns regarding additional park facilities and schools impact. The nomination also raises environmental concerns from the loss of mature tree cover, the negative effects on the watershed, and the adverse impacts on future development from highway noise. Based on the previous analysis, staff recommends the retention of the adoption Plan.